



*Draft Environmental Assessment  
for the*

**Walter E. Hoffman  
United States Courthouse  
Proposed Courthouse Annex  
Norfolk, Virginia**



*Responsible Agency:*

**General Services Administration  
Region 3**

**April 2006**



**Appendix A**  
**Agency Letters**



W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr.  
Secretary of Natural  
Resources



Joseph H. Maroon  
Director

# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

217 Governor Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219-2010  
Telephone (804) 786-7951 FAX (804) 371-2674 TDD (804) 786-2121

January 3, 2006

Robin Griffin  
Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc.  
6110 Frost Place  
Laurel, MD 20707

Re: Lease Construction of US Courthouse Annex

Dear Mr. Griffin:

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage (DCR) has searched its Biotics Data System for occurrences of natural heritage resources from the area outlined on the submitted map. Natural heritage resources are defined as the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, unique or exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic formations.

Biotics documents the presence of natural heritage resources in the project area. However, due to the scope of the activity and the distance to the resources, we do not anticipate that this project will adversely impact these natural heritage resources.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement established between the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) and the DCR, DCR represents VDACS in comments regarding potential impacts on state-listed threatened and endangered plant and insect species. The current activity will not affect any documented state-listed plants or insects.

Additionally, our files do not indicate the presence of any State Natural Area Preserves under DCR's jurisdiction in the project vicinity.

Any absence of data may indicate that the project area has not been surveyed, rather than confirm that the area lacks additional natural heritage resources. New and updated information is continually added to Biotics. Please contact DCR for an update on this natural heritage information if a significant amount of time passes before it is utilized.

A fee of \$60.00 has been assessed for the service of providing this information. Please find enclosed an invoice for that amount. Please return one copy of the invoice along with your remittance made payable to the Treasurer of Virginia, Department of Conservation and Recreation, 203 Governor Street, Suite 414, Richmond, VA 23219, ATTN: Cashier. Payment is due within thirty days of the invoice date.

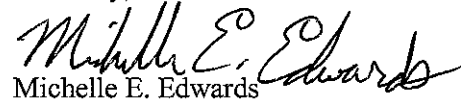
The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries maintains a database of wildlife locations, including threatened and endangered species, trout streams, and anadromous fish waters, that may contain

*State Parks • Soil and Water Conservation • Natural Heritage • Outdoor Recreation Planning  
Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance • Dam Safety and Floodplain Management • Land Conservation*

information not documented in this letter. Their database may be accessed from [http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/info\\_map/index.html](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/info_map/index.html) , or contact Shirl Dressler at (804) 367-6913.

Should you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at (804) 692-0984. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michelle E. Edwards". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and "E".

Michelle E. Edwards

Locality Liaison



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ecological Services  
6669 Short Lane  
Gloucester, VA 23061



Date: January 20, 2006

Project name: GSA - Courthouse Annex

Project number: SEL 7-9408 City/County, VA NORFOLK

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed your request for information on federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species and designated critical habitat for the above referenced project. The following comments are provided under provisions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

✓ We have reviewed the information you have provided and believe that the proposed action will not adversely affect federally listed species or federally designated critical habitat because no federally listed species are known to occur in the project area. Should project plans change or if additional information on listed and proposed species becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered.

We recommend that you contact **both** of the following State agencies for site specific information on listed species in Virginia. Each agency maintains a different database and has differing expertise and/or regulatory responsibility:

Virginia Dept. of Game & Inland Fisheries  
Environmental Services Section  
P.O. Box 11104  
Richmond, VA 23230  
(804) 367-1000

Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Natural Heritage  
217 Governor Street, 2nd Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219  
(804) 786-7951

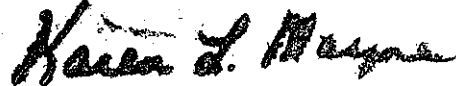
If either agency indicates a federally listed species **is present**, please resubmit your project description with letters from both agencies attached.

If **appropriate habitat may be present**, we recommend surveys within appropriate habitat by a qualified surveyor. Enclosed are county lists with fact sheets that contain information the species' habitat requirements and lists of qualified surveyors. If this project involves a Federal agency (Federal permit, funding, or land), we encourage the Federal agency to contact this office if appropriate habitat is present and if they determine their proposed action may affect federally listed species or critical habitat.

\_\_\_\_\_ Determinations of the presence of waters of the United States, including wetlands, and the need for permits are made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They may be contacted at: Regulatory Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, 803 Front Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23510, telephone (757) 441-7652.

Our website <http://virginiafieldoffice.fws.gov> contains many resources that may assist with project reviews. Point of contact is MIKE DRUMMOND at (804) 693-6694, ext. 114.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen L. Mayne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen L. Mayne  
Supervisor  
Virginia Field Office



GSA Mid-Atlantic Region

OCT 6 2005

Ms. Kristin H. Hill  
Office of Review and Compliance  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23221

Re: Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse Annex Project  
Norfolk, Virginia

Dear Ms. Hill:

Thank you for taking the time to travel to Norfolk, Virginia to meet with us on September 21, 2005 to talk about the captioned project. This letter recaps our meeting and, pursuant to the provisions of 36 CFR Part 800, requests the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' participation in the Section 106 Review process for the Hoffman Courthouse Annex project.

The General Services Administration (GSA) is exploring ways to accommodate the expansion requirements of the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Court-related agencies such as the U.S. Marshal's Service, through the acquisition of a site and the design and construction of a Courthouse Annex. The Courts are currently housed in the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse (Hoffman-CT) located at 600 Granby Street in downtown Norfolk, Virginia. The Hoffman-CT was constructed between 1932 and 1934 and was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. The Hoffman-CT is the only prominent public building of the Art Deco style in the Virginia Tidewater area. The four-story, steel framed building is situated on an irregularly shaped site, covering a two-city block area. The exterior facades of the building are faced in gray limestone, above a polished black granite base at the basement.

The Hoffman-CT is unable to physically accommodate the current and future space needs of the Courts. Several of the existing District Courtrooms do not meet the U. S. Courts Design Guide criteria; and in addition to the existing space deficiencies, the Courthouse lacks a sally port, prisoner elevators, secure holding cells, and necessary private and secure circulation corridors. GSA estimates that approximately 195,000 additional gross square feet of space is needed to satisfy the housing requirements of the Court and Court-related agencies currently located in Norfolk.



As explained during our meeting, GSA has been evaluating various ways to accommodate the projected expansion requirements via the construction of an Annex to the Hoffman-CT for the last several years. In addition, meetings have been held with local government officials seeking input on potential locations for the Annex. Since GSA and the U.S. Courts want to continue to maintain the Hoffman-CT as a functioning Courthouse, the only plausible solution to accommodating the expansion requirement is to build an Annex on an adjacent site. The block to the east of the Hoffman-CT is occupied by the Norfolk Scope Arena. GSA has studied the sites to the south and west, and more recently to the north, of the building.

An Annex on the site south of the Hoffman-CT would allow us to create a unified Courthouse complex. That is, the Hoffman-CT and the Annex could be connected at the basement and at all upper floor levels, and at the same time several significant deficiencies in the Courthouse circulation patterns could be solved. This is the only site which would allow this degree of connection between the existing Courthouse and the Annex. The site is home to a former furniture store, now converted into condominiums, constructed in 1914 and significantly modified in the late 1930's.

An Annex on the site west of the Hoffman-CT, immediately across Granby Street, would result in two separate buildings, with an underground connection or bridge over Granby Street connecting them. This would provide the opportunity to create an architecturally unified complex with a public plaza in front of the new building across from the entrance to the Hoffman-CT, but would require duplicate entrance lobbies and security stations, and would split Court operations. A 32-story condominium tower is currently in development for this site.

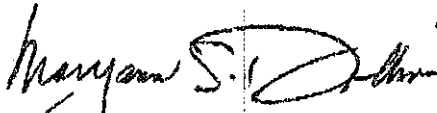
The site to the north of the Hoffman-CT, across Brambleton Avenue, is the current home of a Greyhound bus station. Using this site would result in an Annex that at best may be connected to the Hoffman-CT via an underground connection, although the feasibility of such a connection is very much in question because Brambleton Avenue is a six lane roadway with a turning lane. We believe that creating an architecturally unified Courthouse complex across such a major vehicular thoroughfare would be impossible. Moreover, about half of this site is in a 500 year flood plain.

An Annex on any of the three sites will result in a project that has the potential to affect properties and sites listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Specifically, an Annex would have the potential to affect the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse and the Downtown Norfolk Historic District. Accordingly, GSA plans to hold a public meeting within the next few weeks to allow the citizens of Norfolk and interested parties a forum to express questions, concerns, and ideas about the proposed Annex.

We will continue to work with your office to reach agreement on the area of potential effect (APE), and to assess the potential for impacts to historic resources. As we continue to evaluate the three sites we will provide you with other detailed

information as it becomes available, and updates on the status of the project. We look forward to working with you on this project and want you to know that we welcome your thoughts and recommendations. Please let us know of any concerns you may have at this stage of the project. I can be reached by phone at (215) 446-4649 or by email at [Maryann.Dobbins@gsa.gov](mailto:Maryann.Dobbins@gsa.gov).

Sincerely,



Maryann S. Dobbins  
GSA Regional Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Héctor M Abreu Cintrón  
GSA Liaison  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Mr. Stanley Stein  
Assistant City Manager  
City of Norfolk  
1101 City Hall Building  
810 Union Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr.  
Secretary of Natural Resources

Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick  
Director

November 4, 2005

Tel: (804) 367-2325  
Fax: (804) 367-2391  
TDD: (804) 367-2386  
[www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

Ms. Maryann Dobbins  
Regional Historic Preservation Officer  
U.S. General Services Administration  
The Strawbridge's Building  
20 North Eighth Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3191

Re: Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse Annex Project  
Norfolk, Virginia  
DHR file no. 2001-1543

Dear Ms. Dobbins:

Thank you for your letter of October 6 reopening consultation between our offices for the above referenced project pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. It was a pleasure to meet with you and the other GSA staff on September 21 in Norfolk and I greatly enjoyed my tour of the Hoffman Courthouse. I understand that GSA is exploring the possibilities for constructing an annex to the Hoffman Courthouse. Because of the strong desire on the part of GSA, the resident judges, and, hopefully, the City of Norfolk to maintain court function at the historic courthouse, an attached annex is the preferred alternative.

The possible sites for constructing an attached annex are obviously limited to the four sides of the existing building. They are further limited practically by the traffic patterns and buildings currently surrounding the Courthouse. We concur with your assessment that the construction of an attached annex on any of the possible sites would have an effect on historic properties. The Walter E. Hoffman Courthouse is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the surrounding properties are located in the Downtown Norfolk Historic District. The Showplace Building, located south of the Courthouse is considered a contributing building in the District, as are several of the structures located to the west of the Courthouse. The construction of an annex on either of these sites would probably result in an adverse effect. The Greyhound bus station, located north of the Courthouse across Brambleton Avenue, is not located within the District but it has not been evaluated for eligibility either individually or as part of a separate historic district. Should the north site become the preferred alternative, we would suggest that GSA consider the eligibility of this structure.

Administrative Services  
10 Courthouse Avenue  
Petersburg, VA 23803  
Tel: (804) 863-1624  
Fax: (804) 862-6196

Capital Region Office  
2801 Kensington Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23221  
Tel: (804) 367-2323  
Fax: (804) 367-2391

Tidewater Region Office  
14415 Old Courthouse Way, 2nd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23608  
Tel: (757) 886-2807  
Fax: (757) 886-2808

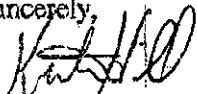
Roanoke Region Office  
1030 Penmar Ave., SE  
Roanoke, VA 24013  
Tel: (540) 857-7585  
Fax: (540) 857-7588

Winchester Region Office  
107 N. Kent Street, Suite 203  
Winchester, VA 22601  
Tel: (540) 722-3427  
Fax: (540) 722-7535

We appreciate GSA's efforts to fully consider the effects to historic properties and the due diligence your agency is exercising with regard to the Section 106 process. I understand that because a possible adverse effect has been identified, GSA has decided to hold a public meeting to present all of the alternatives under consideration and provide a forum for public comment on the project. I plan to attend the public meeting about this project in Norfolk on November 14 and I look forward to hearing your presentation of alternatives considered and the comments of the public. The Department of Historic Resources is in full agreement with GSA about the significance of the Hoffman Courthouse and the importance of retaining full court functions in this historic building. This is an extremely significant building in downtown Norfolk and we are pleased that constructing a new courthouse complex elsewhere is not an option currently under consideration.

I look forward to seeing you in Norfolk on November 14 and to working with you on this important project. If you have any questions in the meantime, I can be reached at (804) 367-2323 ext. 111.

Sincerely,



Kristin Hill, Architectural Historian  
Office of Review and Compliance

Cc: Hector M Abreu Cintron  
GSA Liaison  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

Mr. Stanley Stein  
Assistant City Manager  
City of Norfolk  
1101 City Hall Building  
810 Union Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510



GSA Mid-Atlantic Region

OCT 25 2005

Mr. Mark Perreault, President  
Norfolk Preservation Alliance  
P.O. Box 3338  
Norfolk, Virginia 23517

Dear Mr. Perreault:

The General Services Administration (GSA) would like to invite you to attend a meeting concerning a proposed annex to the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse in Norfolk, Virginia.

GSA is exploring ways to accommodate the expansion requirements of the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and court-related agencies such as the U.S. Marshall's Service, through the acquisition of a site and the design and construction of a U.S. Courthouse Annex in Norfolk.

The Courts are currently housed in the historically significant Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse, 600 Granby Street, Norfolk. Although the Hoffman Courthouse provides functional space for the U.S. District Court, it does not provide an adequate amount of space to meet the Court's existing and projected needs. Based on court projections, GSA estimates that an additional 195,000 gross square feet of space is needed to satisfy the space requirements of the Norfolk Court and court-related agencies. To maintain the Hoffman Courthouse while meeting the Court's space requirements, GSA proposes to build an Annex on an adjacent site.

GSA representatives have sought input from local government officials on potential locations for the Annex. GSA has studied sites to the south, west, and more recently to the north of the Hoffman Courthouse.

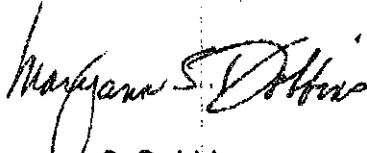
Since the Hoffman Courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and is located within the Downtown Norfolk Historic District, construction of an Annex on any of the three sites under consideration has the potential to affect historic resources listed on or eligible for the NRHP. Accordingly, GSA has initiated consultation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

GSA will conduct a meeting on Monday, November 14, 2005, from 11 o'clock a.m. to 1 o'clock p.m. in Courtroom No. 4 of the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse to provide information and seek public comment and input on the proposed Annex and its potential effects on historic properties. This will be an informal meeting, where visitors may come, receive information, and give both written and oral comments.

U.S. General Services Administration  
The Strawbridge's Building  
20 North Eighth Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3191  
[www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov)

I hope that you are able to attend the upcoming meeting. GSA looks forward to hearing your comments. Should you have any questions regarding the meeting please feel free to contact me at (215) 446-4649 or John Morrell, the Project Manager at (215) 446-4614.

Sincerely,



Maryann S. Dobbins  
Regional Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Kristin H. Hill  
Office of Review and Compliance  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23221

Héctor M. Abreu Cintrón  
GSA Liaison  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004



GSA Mid-Atlantic Region

OCT 25 2005

Mr. Stanley Stein  
Assistant City Manager  
City of Norfolk  
1101 City Hall Building  
810 Union Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510

Dear Mr. Stein:

The General Services Administration (GSA) would like to invite you to attend a meeting concerning a proposed annex to the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse in Norfolk, Virginia.

GSA is exploring ways to accommodate the expansion requirements of the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and court-related agencies such as the U.S. Marshall's Service, through the acquisition of a site and the design and construction of a U.S. Courthouse Annex in Norfolk.

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GSA representatives have sought input from local government officials on potential locations for the Annex. GSA has studied sites to the south, west, and more recently to the north of the Hoffman Courthouse.

Since the Hoffman Courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and is located within the Downtown Norfolk Historic District, construction of an Annex on any of the three sites under consideration has the potential to affect historic resources listed on or eligible for the NRHP. Accordingly, GSA has initiated consultation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

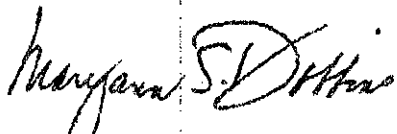
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Sincerely,



Maryann S. Dobbins  
Regional Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Kristin H. Hill  
Office of Review and Compliance  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23221

Héctor M. Abreu Cintrón  
GSA Liaison  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004





GSA Mid-Atlantic Region

OCT 25 2005

Ms. Cathy Coleman, President  
Downtown Norfolk Council  
201 Granby Street, Suite 101  
Norfolk, Virginia 23510-1818

Dear Ms. Coleman:

The General Services Administration (GSA) would like to invite you to attend a meeting concerning a proposed annex to the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse in Norfolk, Virginia.

GSA is exploring ways to accommodate the expansion requirements of the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and court-related agencies such as the U.S. Marshall's Service, through the acquisition of a site and the design and construction of a U.S. Courthouse Annex in Norfolk.

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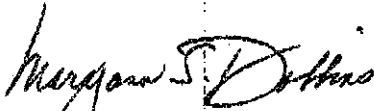
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Sincerely,



Maryann S. Dobbins  
Regional Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Kristin H. Hill  
Office of Review and Compliance  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
2801 Kensington Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23221

Héctor M. Abreu Cintrón  
GSA Liaison  
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation  
1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20004

## **PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**

To accommodate the expansion requirements of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and court-related agencies such as the U.S. Marshal's Service, the General Services Administration is exploring site acquisition, design and construction of a Courthouse Annex to the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse, 600 Granby Street, Norfolk, Virginia.

Based on court projections, GSA estimates that an additional 195,000 gross square feet of space is needed to satisfy the space requirements of the Norfolk Court and court-related agencies.

GSA representatives have explored ways to accommodate the space requirements via construction of an annex to the Hoffman Courthouse. Although the Hoffman Courthouse provides functional space for the U.S. District Court, it does not provide an adequate amount of space to meet the Court's existing and projected needs. To maintain the Hoffman Courthouse while meeting the Court's space requirements, GSA proposes to build an Annex on an adjacent site.

GSA representatives have participated in meetings with local government officials to obtain input on potential locations for the annex. GSA has studied sites to the south, west and north of the Hoffman Courthouse.

Since the Hoffman Courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and is located within the Downtown Norfolk Historic District, construction of an annex on any of the three sites under consideration has the potential to affect historic resources listed on or eligible for the NRHP. Accordingly, GSA has initiated consultation with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office.

**Public notice is hereby given** that GSA will conduct a meeting on Monday, November 14, 2005, from 11 o'clock a.m. to 1 o'clock p.m., in Courtroom No. 4 of the Walter E. Hoffman U.S. Courthouse, 600 Granby Street, Norfolk, Virginia to provide information and seek public comment and input on the proposed Annex and its potential effects on historic properties.

For further information, please contact:

John Morrell  
Project Manager  
General Services Administration  
20 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107